



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 31, 2007
Press Office: 202-712-4320
Public Information: 202-712-4810
www.usaid.gov

FACT SHEET

USAID: Investing in People

Education

The U.S. Government through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) promotes stability and positive participation in the global community through expanded, high-quality education. Adequate investments in education lead to the achievement of most of the other development goals and increase the probability that progress will be sustained. Education enhances the future of children and youth, as they prepare to participate in society and the economy. It also enables adults to gain the skills they need to lead productive lives.

Some examples of USAID global education programs include:

- Africa Education Initiative: The multi-year, \$200 million basic education initiative provides needed training and materials to both teachers and students. In Zambia, the initiative has provided scholarships for over 2,000 disadvantaged girls and training for over 18,000 teachers in the areas of girls' education, HIV/AIDS and life skills, and school health and nutrition.
- The Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training Initiative: The initiative's goal is to reduce high rates of illiteracy and school underachievement by improving instruction in the first through third grades. In Peru, it is successfully developing improved reading and writing skills for nearly 80,000 children in 623 schools. It has trained more than 2,700 teachers, 317 principals and 51 teacher trainers.
- The U.S.-Mexico Partnership for Prosperity: This multi-million dollar, public-private sector alliance has resulted in 60 university partnerships between U.S. and Mexican institutions. These university programs have increased economic opportunities, improved water resource management and addressed vital health issues throughout Mexico.
- Higher-Education Partnership: In Rwanda, a USAID-sponsored higher education partnership between Michigan State University, Texas A&M University and the National University of Rwanda promotes economic development and reconciliation. The partnership created a network of coffee cooperatives throughout the country operated by women and fostered the development of high-grade coffee beans for the international gourmet coffee market. The program has trained thousands of Rwandan men and women in production and management skills.
- Teacher Training: In central Asia, a USAID program focuses on training teachers in student-centered methods, building capacity among school administrators and PTAs, piloting education finance reform, and supporting an independent testing center that administers university entrance exams in an open and transparent manner.

- Rebuilding educational systems: After warfare and other crises, rebuilding the educational systems is critical to establishing the authority of the state, bringing normalcy to the flow of daily life and providing knowledge and skills to children whose lives have been disrupted and frequently shattered. USAID is working in countries such as Kosovo, Rwanda, Haiti, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Indonesia.
- Accelerated Learning Programs: In Afghanistan, 10,500 teachers have been trained and nearly 170,000 students enrolled in a USAID program that is designed to meet the urgent need for schools' new curricula, and trained teachers. Girls and boys who were denied an education under the Taliban are provided an opportunity to catch up to their appropriate grade levels in school through an Accelerated Learning Program that compresses two years of study into a single year through innovative teaching techniques.

Protecting Vulnerable Populations

The U.S. Government, through USAID, supports protection for women and children who are often vulnerable to violence, exploitation, human traffickers and in many places do not have legal rights to property or inheritance.

Some examples of USAID programs include:

- Shelters for Victims of Trafficking in Persons: Victims of human trafficking need safe shelters where they can recover from their ordeal as slaves and gain the skills needed to begin new, productive lives. USAID is implementing pilot shelter programs in Ecuador and Cambodia that will not only help individual trafficking victims, but will also strengthen the skills and capacity among the local care providers.
- Safety in Schools: Over the last four years, USAID has supported programs in Malawi and Ghana to reduce gender-based violence against schoolchildren. Teachers, school headmasters, community members and students are receiving training to protect children from abuse. USAID is working closely with ministries of education to strengthen teacher codes of conduct so teachers are held accountable for their treatment of students.
- Legal Rights: In Benin, USAID supported the development of landmark legislation to address sexual harassment, a critical problem for girls and women in schools, at home, and in the workplace; the legislation was passed and signed into law in 2006. In Rwanda, where no formal courses existed for judges, magistrates, lawyers, or other legal professionals on gender or women's rights, USAID worked with the Ministry of Justice and the new National Institute for Legal Practice and Development to develop a course on gender issues in family law. In Guatemala, USAID trained nearly 50 community women as certified paralegals who in turn assisted more than 5,000 women suffering from domestic violence.
- Protection of Children in Albania: In Albania, one of the poorest countries in Europe, the USAID-funded Transnational Action against Child Trafficking (TACT) is working to protect the most vulnerable – ethnic minority children. Albania is a source and transit country for trafficking victims. TACT is protecting children and has reached more than 25,000 children with its anti-trafficking message in half of the districts in the country.
- Combating Violence against Women: Through the President's Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative in Africa, the Departments of State, in close collaboration with USAID and the Department of Justice, is seeking to reduce gender-based violence in Benin, Kenya, South Africa and Zambia.

This will be achieved by increasing awareness on the issue of gender-based violence, improving the criminal justice system -- police and courts included -- to address and penalize perpetrators, and addressing the short- and longer-term needs of survivors of sexual violence.

- Access to Secure Savings Instruments: Secure savings provides an important source of enhanced security for poor households. USAID is working with many microfinance institutions to develop their capacity to provide savings instruments to their clientele. Today over 6 million poor households use microfinance institutions to save money. The deposits are small, often times not amounting to more than \$1 a week. The total savings portfolios of these institutions is enormous, however, amounting to over \$2.5 billion. These same funds also capitalize on loan portfolios that help the same families expand their small enterprises.

For more information about USAID, please visit www.usaid.gov.

#